

1. Characteristics and situation

-Unit name : Faculty of Vietnamese Studies (VNS), University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH)

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-Establishment and Development:

December 26th, 1998. President of VNU-HCMC (Vietnam National University – Hochiminh City) signed Decision No. 439/QĐ/ĐHQG/TCCB to establish the Faculty of Vietnamese Studies on the basis of the Department of Vietnamese Language and Vietnamese Culture of the Vietnam – Southeast Asia Research Center.

Academic year 2000 – 2001. The first undergraduate course started with 13 students, all of whom are foreigners. So far, after 17 courses, nearly 500 students have matriculated to the major of Vietnamese Studies, not to mention nearly 250 students of joint programs in the form of 2 + 2 and 3 + 1 with Universities of Busan, Chungwoon, Youngsan. Every year the VNS Faculty organizes many Study Tours for hundreds of students, professors from the Universities from Singapore, USA, Japan, Korea, Thailand, etc. Special subjects are lectured in English, combined with field trips, sightseeing tours.

In 2009. The VNS Faculty was given permission by VNU – HCMC to provide Graduate Education with Vietnamese Studies major. 14 courses have been accomplished so far (2 courses a year), training 120 learners, 15% of whom are foreigners. Up to now there have been

nearly 50 learners having successfully defended Master thesis. The VNS Faculty has developed a Profile submitted to VNU – HCMC to ask for permission for Doctoral Education majoring Vietnamese Studies in 2017.

January 8th, 2012. The Undergraduate Training Program of Vietnamese Studies met the AUN-QA (ASEAN Universities Network – Quality Assurance) standards. This was the first Undergraduate Training Program in the University to meet those standards. That was also a milestone to mark the significant progress of the VNS Faculty.

Besides Undergraduate and Graduate Education, there is a prominent activity of the VNS Faculty over the past years. That is organizing short courses on Vietnamese Language and Special subjects on Vietnamese Studies for foreigners from all over the world; especially for those who are currently working in HCMC as well as in other provinces and towns in the South of Vietnam; such as staffs of the Consulate General of the United States, and many other Diplomatic Agencies, Companies, etc. Classes have also been held on Vietnamese Language, Culture, Constitution and Law for those foreigners who want to take the Vietnamese Citizenship Test. It can be asserted that the VNS Faculty has become a reliable destination for foreign tourists, students and learners. At present, the VNS Faculty is a training facility which has the highest number of foreign learners in Vietnam. After nearly 20 years of education, there has been approximately 50,000 turns of learners from 73 nations and territories to enroll learning and studying at the VNS Faculty. In the last year, there were more than 5,100 turns of learners to enroll for courses on Vietnamese Language, excluding other Study Tour Delegations. Integrating with the world, introducing an image of Vietnam which is bettering itself and wants to be friends with other countries are those activities that have been performed actively, creatively and effectively at the Faculty of Vietnamese Studies.

Having recognized the importance of this new discipline in the trend of integration, internationalization and globalization, the university leaders have been very concerned about the development of Vietnamese Studies. This can be seen from *the Strategic Development Plan for USSH in the period 2011-2015*

. For the structure of training sectors, this plan has determined: “

Constructing some training sectors with top quality in Vietnam, such as: Vietnamese Studies, Korean Studies, Japanese Studies, Urban Studies, etc”

. In order to achieve this, “

we must focus on constructing a number of educational programs approaching regional/ international standards

”. Among them there includes Vietnamese Studies. We should diversify the forms of training of those faculties that have strength in attracting foreign students, especially the Faculty of

Vietnamese Studies, to meet AUN-QA standards. Regarding the research, this plan emphasizes on establishing and promoting the role of the research groups in the traditional advantage fields of the university such as the groups of Cultural Studies, Literature, Philosophy, Vietnamese Studies, Area Studies, etc. so as to solve the important issues of Vietnam in general, as well as of the Southern of Vietnam in particular. Regarding the international relations, we must enhance cooperation to open some overseas training facilities for Vietnamese Studies and Vietnamese Language; constructing a number of special courses in English by topic, cultural tours on request of foreign universities. In order to develop the key training sectors of USSH, the plan claimed that it is necessary to formulate a scheme on establishing one/ some units for training specialized fields, especially in the fields cooperating with foreign countries. According to the plan, Vietnamese Studies is one of the training sectors that were selected as pilot ones.

2. Functions and Duties

Along with the university, the Faculty of Vietnamese Studies has the function of performing such duties of educating – training, doing scientific research as followed:

- + Full-time training for Undergraduate and Graduate majoring in Vietnamese Studies.

- + Short-term teaching of Vietnamese Language and Vietnamese Culture for foreign student delegations having partnerships with the university.

- + Doing scientific research associated with training, serving social practices

3. Several of the Milestones

1) December 26th, 1998. President of VNU-HCMC (Vietnam National University – Hochiminh City) signed Decision No. 439/QĐ/ĐHQG/TCCB to establish the Faculty of Vietnamese Studies

on the basis of the Department of Vietnamese Language and Vietnamese Culture of the Vietnam – Southeast Asia Research Center.

2) Academic year 2000 – 2001. The First Undergraduate Course started with 13 students, all of whom are foreigners. So far, after 17 courses, nearly 550 students have matriculated to the major of Vietnamese Studies, not to mention more than 250 students of joint programs in the form of 2 + 2 and 3 + 1 with Universities of Busan, Chungwoon, Youngsan. Every year the VNS Faculty organizes many Study Tours for hundreds of students, professors from the Universities from Singapore, USA, Japan, Korea, Thailand, etc. Special subjects are lectured in English, combined with field trips, sightseeing tours. The average scale of training over the past 5 years is 200 foreign students (both full-time and joint training 2 + 2 and 3 + 1). For the full-time training, there are 40 students on average matriculating at the VNS Faculty annually. Within the two recent years (2014, 2015), the number of students registering for the entrance exam and matriculating increased sharply, from 35 students / exam on average to 35 students / exam. In 2015, there were 63 students registering and 58 students matriculated to the major of Vietnamese Studies. All of those students are foreigners. 90% of whom are Koreans. The number of students eligible for the diploma in the past 5 years is 200 students (40 students / year on average).

3) In 2009. The VNS Faculty launched the First Course for Graduate students with Vietnamese Studies major. 7 students matriculated to the 1st course. So far, there have been 13 courses accomplished with more than 150 learners, 15% of whom are foreigners. 50 learners from the 1st courses have successfully defended their Master Thesis with Vietnamese Studies major. The VNS Faculty has developed a Profile submitted to VNU – HCMC to ask for permission for Doctoral Education majoring Vietnamese Studies in 2017.

4) January 8th, 2012. The Undergraduate Training Program of Vietnamese Studies met the AUN-QA (ASEAN Universities Network – Quality Assurance) standards. This was the first Undergraduate Training Program in the University to meet those standards. That was also a milestone to mark the significant progress of the VNS Faculty. The success of the VNS Faculty also contributed to encourage other units in the registration for AUN-QA assessment.

5) 15,790 turns of learners of all kinds, 3,158 turns of learners on average admitted to Courses on Vietnamese Language, Special subjects on Vietnamese Studies, Vietnamese Culture over the past 5 years 2011-2015. This is a prominent activity besides Undergraduate and Graduate training. Many international visitors, especially those who are currently working in HCMC as well as in nearby provinces and towns have chosen the VNS Faculty to study Vietnamese language

and issues related to Vietnamese Studies. They are, for example, the staffs of the Consulate General of the United States, the Consulate General of South Korea, KOTRA, KOICA Organizations, Samsung, LG Corporations, etc. and many other Diplomatic Agencies, Corporations, Foreign Companies. Classes have also been held on Vietnamese Language, Culture, Constitution and Law for those foreigners who want to take the Vietnamese Citizenship Test. It can be asserted that the VNS Faculty has become a reliable destination for foreign tourists, students and learners. At present, the VNS Faculty is a training facility which has the highest number of foreign learners in Vietnam. The number of students of those classes has been increasing more and more: 2,959 turns in 2011, 2,870 turns in 2012, 3,460 turns in 2013, 3,633 turns in 2014, 2,868 turns in 2015(up to August).

Since 2013, the VNS Faculty has successfully signed two significant contracts for teaching Vietnamese language for the staffs of the Consulate General of the United States (25 learners on average / year, learning all year round) and for KOTRA (The Korean Trade and Investment Agency) (Courses have been held twice with 40 learners who are Korean specialists, managers in textile and garment, leather and footwear industries. They study Vietnamese Language and Vietnamese Culture in 6 months.). In August 2015, KOICA Organization (Korea International Cooperation Agency) appointed 8 volunteers to come to the VNS Faculty to learn Vietnamese Language and Vietnamese Culture. These contracts have brought considerable revenue to the University. But above all, they increase the prestige of the University in the eyes of important foreign partners. Besides, there are currently also courses on Vietnamese Language for most of the leaders, staffs, experts of the Diplomatic Corps from Korea, Thailand, Australia, India, etc. in HCMC.

Another activity which has been done very effectively and regularly over the years is opening review classes and holding Vietnamese Language Proficiency Tests for A, B, C certificates. On average, the tests are held 6 times a year and each time there are about 80 examinees. For the two recent years, the VNS Faculty has provided online contest form to increase the utility and objectivity in examinations. The VNS Faculty has also associated with the Faculty of Vietnamese Language of Busan University of Foreign Studies to organize the certification exams for Korean students and learners at the Partner Campus.

Over the past years, the VNS Faculty has also provided courses on Vietnamese Language and Vietnamese Culture for students from the delegations of Ritsumeikan

Asia Pacific University

(
APU
),
Kokushikan University (Japan),
Loyola, CSA (the US), Nanyang (Singapore), Cambodia, Srinakharinwirot (Thailand), ANU (Australia), etc. with 100 students, lecturers/ year on average.

6) 1,821 is the number of the turns of learners who took the Vietnamese Language Proficiency Tests for A, B, C certificates in 5 years (2011 – 2015). The review classes for the Testare held all year round by the VNS Faculty. The VNS Faculty holds the tests regularly every 2 months, on the even-numbered months, and then submits to the Rector to grant the Certificates of Vietnamese Language Proficiency to foreigners. There are an average of 60 examinees every time.

Since October 2014, the VNS Faculty has launched online contest form to replace for the traditional one. Of the 5 skills, there are 3 skills: Grammar – Vocabulary, Listening, Reading Comprehension that examinees will take online tests from the bank of examination questions compiled by the VNS Faculty. The rest 2 skills will be gradually shifted to online form.

Since early 2015, the Faculty of Vietnamese Language of Busan University of Foreign Studies - Korea has associated with the VNS Faculty to organize the Vietnamese Language Proficiency certification exams for Korean students and learners from within and outside of the University at the Busan University Campus with both online and paper forms. The Faculty of Vietnamese Language has also allowed students with Vietnamese Language major to submit a certificate granted by the University of Social Sciences and Humanities instead of taking Graduation Exam.

In Vietnam, the Certificate of Vietnamese Language Proficiency granted by the Rector of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities - Vietnam National University – Hochiminh City is one of the requirements for foreigners to be recruited to work in FDI / joint venture companies, factories in HCMC as well as in nearby provinces and towns such as Binh Duong, Dong Nai, Ba Ria – Vung Tau, etc.

7) 74 nationalities, 5 continents: So far, there have been students from all the continents, 74 countries and territories coming to study at the VNS Faculty. Over the 5 recent years, the numbers of nationalities of the students studying at the VNS Faculty are: 2011: 50 nationalities; 2012: 52 nationalities; 2013: 47 nationalities; 2015: 52 nationalities.

8) 65%, 2000 USD Most of the students of the VNS Faculty can find a steady job right after graduation. Statistically, the percentage of the students who can find good job in Vietnam is about 65% and in their home country is about 17%. About 5% of those students continue to enter Graduate Education with Vietnamese Studies major. The salary depends on the labor market and professional competence. On average, a student graduated from the VNS Faculty has a salary of 2000 USD / month. For the job positions, according to still incomplete statistic

s, there are currently many former students

of the VNS Faculty working in the Board of Directors, as Head of Departments, staffs of Diplomatic Agencies, Corporations, Companies, etc. such as

the Consulate General of South Korea in Hanoi, HCMC, The Korean Trade and Investment Agency in HCMC (KOTRA),

Corporations

of Samsung, LG Vina, POSCO Vietnam, Kumho Tires, DOOSAN- Vina, Uri bank, Daegu bank, Happy Cook, Telecom, Lock & Lock, etc.

It can be asserted that the VNS Faculty of the USSH has actively contributed to the process of enhancing the position of Vietnamese Language on the international level. Vietnamese Language has become a foreign language taught in quite many universities and schools over the world. The most recently case was in May, 2013. Because the need of Vietnamese Language learning is increasing and the relationship between the South Korea and Vietnam has been strengthened more and more, the Ministry of Education of South Korea has officially accredited Vietnamese Language one of the 9 foreign languages for the University Entrance Examination in this country (along with English, German, French, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish and Arabic). At present, many universities in South Korea has got a Faculty of Vietnamese Language. In 2000, the Cheong Nam Foreign Language Highschool opened a department of Vietnamese Language. According to the Ministry of Education of Taiwan (China), from 2018, seven languages in Southeast Asia included Vietnamese will be official subjects in elementary schools in Taiwan.